

THE APPLICATION OF RECIPROCAL STRATEGY TO INCREASE STATE ISLAMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (MAN) STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: This research is aimed at finding out whether or not there is a significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement between those who are taught by using reciprocal strategy and those who are not. The result shows that students' reading comprehension achievement of the experimental group has higher mean score than the students of the control group. Furthermore, based on the independent *t-test* score (22.67) with the sig. value 0.898, it is found that the use of reciprocal strategy is effective. This can also be meant that there is a significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement between those who are taught by using reciprocal strategy and those who are not. This can be stated that reciprocal strategy brings positive impact on MAN students' reading comprehension achievement.

Keywords: *reciprocal strategy, senior high students, reading comprehension*

Reading is one of language skills which focuses on comprehension process happened during and after reading. Tarigan (2008, p.7) states that reading activity is a process done by readers in order to dig up the idea proposed by the writer. Reading can

also be considered as a process of understanding implied ideas proposed as in stated. This means that reading is a process of understanding printed document(s) or text(s). From those ideas, there is a similarity on what reading is really

about. All concepts reflect to what reading is considered as a process of language skills which aims at finding out the idea proposed by the writer in the printed text(s) or document(s). In understanding printed text(s), the cognitive aspect of every reader plays a significant role. Therefore, there will be different understanding of the similar reading text(s).

Reading comprehension is defined by Baker (2008, p. 25) as the process of understanding of what is being read. The ability to comprehend the text is the meaningful key to be successful readers. Further idea is that reading comprehension is considered as the process of gaining meaning of the texts as they are interrelated each other. Here, the process involves vocabulary mastery along with reasoning. Therefore, reading comprehension is not passive language learning, but it reflects active language learning process.

Basically, one of reading objectives is to find out the facts or details of the texts being read in order to figure out the main idea and supporting ideas as integrated with grammatical and vocabulary comprehension. As indicated in

simple interview conducted by the team with teachers of English in several senior high schools, it was found that there are some problems faced in English learning classroom, such as: (a) students are not well-motivated in learning English. They tend to assume that English is a difficult subject to learn; (b) learning atmosphere and learning facilities which are not well-supported to the English learning pedagogy; (c) many students have limited vocabulary mastery; and (d) most of students do not really understand English grammar.

From those problems, the researchers tried to promote a better English learning strategy particularly for reading skill. It is hoped that this can increase students' learning motivation which can bring positive effect on their reading comprehension achievement at the end. The strategy applied called Reciprocal Learning Strategy.

Reciprocal learning is a process of cooperative learning which relies on students' learning cooperation in small groups in order to share ideas (Suratno, 2008, p.152). Another similar ideas is proposed by Suyatno (2009, p.64) who states that

reciprocal learning is a learning strategy that deeply focuses on questioning in which students are trained to develop their metacognitive skills. From the two concepts above, it can be learned that reciprocal learning directs students to be actively involved in language learning in order to have better social character. Reciprocal learning strategy is included in constructivism approach which is based on questioning principles (Trianto, 2009, p. 96).

Reciprocal learning is taught by applying direct learning (Trianto, 2009, p.175). There are several steps involved:

- 1) Teacher provides learning materials that will be learned
- 2) Teacher explains to the students that at the first phase, he or she will be the model;
- 3) Students are asked to read learning materials as provided by teacher;
- 4) When students have already read learning materials provided, they are then asked to practice several activities, such as: *predicting* possible questions that will be asked by teacher. Here, teacher gives students chances to answer

the questions. When they find difficulties, they may see their learning materials. This gives students opportunities to give their opinion and possibly ask when they find unclear ideas;

- 1) Students are asked to act as teachers during learning process, i.e., to encourage others' involvement in classroom discussion;
- 2) For the next days, teacher tries to limit his or her role in classroom language learning. This is to promote students to be actively involved in language learning process.

This strategy is promoted because this can stimulate students to be actively involved in learning process. In this study, the researcher limited the focus of the research into narrative texts. In this investigation, the problems are formulated into the following question: Is there any significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement for those who are taught by using Reciprocal Learning Strategy and those who are not?

In this study, there are two hypotheses of the research, they are:

null hypothesis (Ho) and alternative hypothesis (Ha). Here is the statement of the hypotheses of the research:

- Ho: There is no any significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement for those who are taught by using Reciprocal Learning Strategy and those who are not.
- Ha: There is any significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement for those who are taught by using Reciprocal Learning Strategy and those who are not.

METHODOLOGY

This study applied researcher used Quasi-experiment research design-*non equivalent pretest and posttest* (Creswell, 2012, p.132). This involves both experimental and control groups where the two groups are tested as in the form of pretest and posttest.

The experimental and control groups were tested at the initial phase (*pretest*) and tested at the final phase (*posttest*). However, only the experimental group that was given the treatment as in the form of

language learning through reciprocal strategy.

Place and Time of the Research

This study was done at the State Islamic Senior High School(MAN) of Prabumulih. The research was conducted for twelve months, i.e., from preparation phase until reporting phase.

Population and Sample of the Research

Fraenkel (2012, p.91) states that population is a larger group of subjects where one can apply the output gained. In this study, population is all the tenth grade students at State Islamic Senior High School (MAN) Prabumulih in academic year of 2015/2016. The sample of this research is taken from several criteria. Here, there are 60 students taken to be the sample and is grouped into experimental and control groups.

Data Collection

An instrument (*test items*) was used to collect data from students, i.e., in the pretest and posttest. Pretest was done to measure students' preliminary knowledge before being treated, while posttest

was given as the way to measure learning achievement gained by students.

In constructing the test items, the researchers estimated the validity and reliability of the instrument. Here, test instrument was reflected to content validity as relevant to English syllabus applied to students.

Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher analyzed students' reading comprehension by checking students' correct and incorrect answers. If their answers are correct, the point is 1 and if their answers are incorrect, the score is 0.

The researcher also analyzed students' mean, mode, lowest and highest scores. Statistical analysis, i.e., *independent t-test* to know whether or not there was a significant difference on students' reading comprehension between those who were taught using reciprocal strategy and those who were not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation of the findings cover: (1) pretest scores gained by the experimental group, (2) pretest scores gained by the control group,

(3) posttest scores gained by the experimental group, (4) posttest scores gained by the control group, and (5) independent t test scores.

Pretest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

The result of the statistical analysis showed that there were 18 students (62.1%) who got scores between 20-50 and 11 students (37.9%) who got scores between 52.5-75. This means that most of students in the experimental group get lower scores (i.e., lower than 50) for the pretest. This can reflect that students' reading comprehension was at the low level.

The result of the pretest of the control group showed that 29 students (96.7%) got scores between 15-47.5 and there was only 1 student (3.3%) who get scores higher than 50, i.e., 52,5. This can reflect that students' reading comprehension was at the low level.

Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

After being treated by using reciprocal strategy, the students' reading achievement in the experimental group showed significant improvement. There was

no more students who got scores lower than 60. Based on the posttest given, it was found that there were 6 students (20.7%) who got scores between 60-65 and there were 23 students (79.3%) who get scores between 70-92.5. This means that reciprocal strategy has important role in increasing students' English reading comprehension achievement, particularly for State Islamic Senior High School (MAN).

The result of post test for the control group showed that the students' posttest scores of the control group are getting lower. This can be seen that there is no student who can get score higher than 50. Based on the posttest given, it was found that there were 18 students (60%) who get scores between 10-25. Then, there were 12 students (40%) who get scores between 27-50. This means that appropriate learning strategy can have positive impact to the students' learning achievement. When learning strategy is not appropriate, there will be no improvement on learning achievement.

The Result of Independent *t*-test

The experimental group (*group treated by using reciprocal strategy*) had higher mean score (75.43) than those who were in the control group (24.08). It can be claimed that the process of learning English for reading skill by using reciprocal strategy brings positive impact on students' reading comprehension achievement.

Further statistical analysis showed that since the sig. value is higher than 0.05, it means that there is a significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement between those who are taught by using reciprocal strategy and those who are not. This means that English learning process of reading skill by using reciprocal strategy is more effective for students of MAN Prabumulih.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

There are several conclusions made based on the findings of the research, they are:

- There is a significant improvement of the experimental group after being taught by using reciprocal strategy;

- There is a significant decrease of students' scores in the contro, group because they are not taught with the appropriate learning strategy;
- There is a significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement between those who are taught by using reciprocal strategy and those who are not.

In relation to the findings and interpretation of the research, it is suggested that teachers of English need to consider to apply appropriate learning strategy related to learning material. One of them is reciprocal strategy. It is also suggested that learning material ideally reflect to students' real life experience in order to promote students' learning motivation.

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